

Morgan County Commission Meeting Minutes

August 20, 2009

Members Present: Thomas Swaim, Brenda Hutchinson and Stacy Dugan

The meeting was opened by Debra Kesecker, County Clerk at 3:34 p.m.

Administration

On a Thomas Swaim/Stacy Dugan motion, the County Commission approved the minutes from the August 13, 2009 County Commission meeting. This motion carried.

Unemployment Rate

Commissioner Hutchinson stated that according to the West Virginia State Journal paper, the unemployment rate for Morgan County is 9.9%.

Health Department Annual Flu Shots

The Commission received a memo stating that the Morgan County Health Department has offered to provide flu vaccinations for county employees and their spouses during the month of October. The Health Department will also be providing Swine Flu vaccinations this year. The swine flu vaccinations consist of a series of two shots, administered three weeks apart and each injection is at a cost of \$20.00. The County Commission discussed and decided to contact Lee Fowler at the Morgan County Health Department to discuss the cost of the vaccinations for the county employees before making a decision.

Tax Evaluation Committee

Commissioner Swaim asked Commissioner Hutchinson to update the Commission on the Tax Evaluation Committee. Commissioner Hutchinson explained that the committee has had two meetings and found out that the appraisals seem balanced and the committee has compared the levy rates in other counties, and Morgan County is lower than or right at the levy rate compared to the neighboring counties. Commissioner Swaim thanked her for the update.

Allegheny Power

Commissioner Dugan presented a letter from Allegheny Power that states Allegheny Power will be increasing the cost of utility bills. Commissioner Dugan explained to the Commission that she would like to submit a letter to Allegheny Power opposing the rate increase. The Commission agreed and will submit a letter to Allegheny Power opposing a rate increase at this time.

September 3, 2009 County Commission Meeting

On a Stacy Dugan/Thomas Swaim motion, the County Commission meeting for September 3, 2009 has been cancelled. This motion carried. The September 10, 2009 County Commission meeting will start at 9:30 a.m. as previously scheduled.

Paw Paw Funds Request

The Commission had received a request for funds form from the Town of Paw Paw on July 23, 2009, due to insufficient funds at that time, the Commission decided to revisit the request at a later date. The funds request was for the amount of \$1500.00 to purchase fireworks for the Paw Paw Festival that is scheduled for September 19th and 20th. The Commission discussed the request and acknowledged the request was originally received on July 23, 2009, before the new funds request policy was originated. On a Stacy Dugan/Thomas Swaim motion, the County Commission approved funds in the amount of \$1260.00 for the Town of Paw Paw for the Paw Paw Festival. This motion carried.

Morgan County Rescue Squad Board of Directors- Contract / Generator

Contract

John Corson and Steve McBee approached the Commission to discuss the generator purchase and the contract between the Morgan County Commission and the Morgan County Rescue Squad Board of Directors. The Commission discussed the contract with Mr. Corson and Mr. McBee. Mr. Corson and Mr. McBee agreed to accept the contract after language changes. The Commission reviewed the language changes and agreed to the changes and will present a new contract including the changes to the Morgan County Rescue Board of Directors.

Generator

Mr. McBee approached the Commission to discuss the purchase of the generators. Mr. McBee stated that the money that was taken out of the ambulance fee account to purchase a generator for the Paw Paw Senior Center should not have been taken out. Mr. McBee explained that the money for the generator was included in the grant money that was received. Deputy County Clerk, Cathy Payne presented a detailed budget report of the rescue squads expenses to the Commission and the Rescue Squad Board of Directors. The Commission explained that the grant money was not enough to purchase the three generators and now all 3 chosen locations will have a generator, and it all works out in the end. Commissioner Hutchinson stated that the rescue squad and the sheriff's department share the same building and maybe the two entities could split the \$15,609.00 in half. Commissioners Dugan and Swaim disagreed to splitting the cost and stand by the motion made on July 23, 2009 stating that the Commission will take \$15,609.00 from the Morgan County Ambulance Fee account to pay for a portion of the generator for Station #7. Commissioner Hutchinson presented a list of concerns from the citizens of Morgan County to the board of directors. The Commission and the board of directors discussed some of the concerns. Commissioner Hutchinson stated that they are going to have to agree to disagree and move forward. Mr. McBee agreed.

Executive Session- Personnel Matter

On a Stacy Dugan/Brenda Hutchinson motion, the County Commission went into executive session at 5:40 p.m. to discuss a personnel matter. Commissioner Swaim opposed and excused himself from the Executive Session. Commissioner Swaim stated that he does not feel anything can be accomplished and he does not wish to be part of the conversation.

On a Stacy Dugan/ Brenda Hutchinson motion, the County Commission reconvened into regular session at 6:45 p.m. Commissioner Dugan stated that there was an issue with the

hiring of an employee in the Circuit Clerks office. Commissioner Dugan stated that the hiring process was not followed correctly according to the employee handbook and she wanted to explain that the County Commission had nothing to do with the hiring or the help wanted ad that was placed in the Morgan Messenger newspaper. Commissioner Hutchinson explained that the Circuit Clerk had hired an employee and asked for the County Commission's approval and since the hiring did not follow the procedure in the employee handbook, the Commission cannot approve it, but as long as the Circuit Clerk takes full responsibility, she is ready to move on and considers the matter closed.

Bill Clark- West PEP Resolution

Bill Clark approached the Commission with a West PEP Resolution. Carol Crabtree, representing the Eastern Panhandle Regional Planning and Development Council- Region 9 approached the Commission and explained that each county needs a representative as a board member. Ms. Crabtree requested that the County Commission appoint the Economic Development Authority Director to be a member of the board. On a Thomas Swaim/Stacy Dugan motion, the County Commission authorized its president, Brenda J. Hutchinson to designate the Executive Director of the Morgan County Development Authority to represent Morgan County's interest as a member of the West PEP Board of Directors, along the Executive Director of the Eastern Panhandle Regional Planning and Development Council- Region 9. This motion carried.

Gary Brock- Humane Society of the US- Anti-tethering

Gary Brock, representing Unchain Morgan County, approached the Commission and presented a notebook including a petition signed by the citizens of Morgan County. Mr. Brock explained that he has been working with the citizens of Morgan County and would like to create an anti-chaining ordinance that would limit the conditions for dogs to be chained in Morgan County. Mr. Brock explained that the ordinance will allow the chaining of dogs and the main purpose of the ordinance is to protect the dogs and the citizens of Morgan County. Dr. Jane Doyle, representing Animalia Veterinary approached the Commission and explained that a dog that is continuously chained can become aggressive and a danger to other dogs or humans. Terri Rudder, representing Justice for Dogs approached the Commission and presented a power point slideshow showing how animals can be mistreated and neglected. Adam Goldfarb, representing the Humane Society of the United States approached the Commission and stated that according to a study that was completed in Denver, dogs that are continuously chained are three times more likely to bite. Debra Shamburg, representing the Hampshire County Animal Control approached the Commission and explained that Kanawha County is trying to pass an anti-tethering ordinance. Ms. Shamburg explained some of the cases she has dealt with in Hampshire County and how dogs that live on chains can be aggressive. Ms. Shamburg stated that it is up to the citizens to help these dogs. The Commission thanked everyone for coming and thanked Mr. Brock for all his hard work. The Commission agreed to create an anti-tethering ordinance and have the prosecuting attorney review it and then move forward with a public hearing to hear the citizens concerns. The ordinance has been placed on the agenda for the September 24, 2009 County Commission meeting at 11:30 a.m. A decision will be made at that time to set a date for a public hearing.

Commissioner Dugan- County Commission consent to hire process- WV Code 7-7-7
Commissioner Dugan presented a consent to hire process memo to the Commission for review and approval. Commissioners Hutchinson and Swaim reviewed the memo and Commissioner Swaim stated that he is not happy with the memo and he thinks that the elected officials should advertise and hire employees as they see fit. Commissioner Dugan stated that she does not think any elected official should have a problem coming to an open meeting to consult the County Commission before they hire someone. Commissioner Hutchinson stated that she feels the memo needs some language changes and additions and then be placed for approval at the next County Commission meeting on August 27, 2009. The Commission agreed to make some language changes and additions to the memo and revisit it at the County Commission meeting on August 27, 2009.

Bob Ford- War Memorial Hospital

Bob Ford approached the Commission concerning the sale of the War Memorial Hospital. Mr. Ford gave a brief history of the War Memorial Hospital and the time he was a County Commissioner himself. Mr. Ford explained a few years ago, himself and Bill Clark, Economic Development Authority Director put together an economic development proposal for the new hospital. Mr. Ford explained all the work the Commissioners had done at that time to get a new hospital for Morgan County. Mr. Ford expressed his concerns for the sale of War Memorial Hospital and requested to the Commission that they meet with Governor Manchin and try to get any problems resolved. Commissioner Hutchinson explained that she is in the process of getting a meeting with the governor. The Commission thanked Mr. Ford for his time and knowledge.

Adjournment

On a Stacy Dugan/Thomas Swaim motion, the County Commission adjourned the County Commission meeting at 8:35 p.m. This motion carried.